



Knowing Your Options: Instructional Strategies

Why go this route?

- Because students learn differently... and different strategies speak to different learners.
- Because teachers teach differently... and finding what works for you is part of what makes any strategy work.
- Because learning is an active process and requires teachers to make on-the-spot decisions from a rich repertoire of choices.
- Because transfer and retention are enhanced when multiple strategies are used to learn something.
- Because multiple thinking skills are promoted when strategies are varied.

You'll know you've arrived when...

- You, as a teacher, or administrator have, as part of your practice, several different instructional strategies that can be used for different goals.
- Your daily choices reflect a match between the objective, the learner and the strategy you've selected.

Construction Zone

- This is the fourth (of six) steps in a full instructional design and delivery cycle outlined in MI-Map Packets. See Packets 5:1 to 5:6 for the others.



- This packet is designed to help a teacher broaden his/her repertoire of instructional options. The strategy descriptions are framed as observational checklists identifying what an observer would see when walking into a classroom using each strategy. If principal and teacher discussed observed patterns after a classroom "walkthrough," these summaries might be a way to "shop" for complementary new ones to develop.
- If teachers want to learn an unfamiliar strategy to expand their repertoire, professional development time (and a plan) would be required.



It's about TIME

- Browsing through the descriptions can be done in less than an hour.
- Learning a new strategy well could take several months.




Potential COSTS

- Professional development if desired.

The Process

*A step-by-step guide
to expanding your range
of instructional strategies*

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

1 Familiarize yourself with a range of strategies that speak to different types of learners. Use INSERT A for Step 1 to determine your knowledge of instructional practices.

INSERTS B-I offer overviews of eight popular instructional design strategies. They are based on an Administrators' Guide originally developed by the Association of California School Administrators and formatted here as checklists that an observer would use to see how closely a classroom practice aligned with the learning theory behind that particular strategy. Use them to check that all aspects of your chosen strategies are really coming into play when you implement them.

BEHAVIOR FAMILY:

INSERT B: Direct Instruction

INSERT C: Lecture Plus

SOCIAL INTERACTION FAMILY:

INSERT D: Cooperative Learning

INSERT E: Role Play

INFORMATION PROCESSING FAMILY:

INSERT F: Concept Attainment

INSERT G: Inquiry

PERSONAL FAMILY:

INSERT H: Syntectics

INSERT I: Brainstorming

2 Determine the goals of a particular lesson or unit.

In general, particular kinds of learning lend themselves to one or another “family” of strategies, though categorization is much less important than a good fit of strategy:

Use BEHAVIOR strategies for knowledge acquisition.

Use SOCIAL INTERACTION strategies to develop social skill and processes.

Use INFORMATION PROCESSING strategies for problem solving/critical thinking.

Use PERSONAL strategies to encourage creativity and originality.

3 Then “teach around the wheel” by adding other activities that reinforce or deepen the learning through other experiences.

INSERT for Step 3 describes a technique for differentiating learning explained in MI-Map Packet 5:2 “Knowing Your Students.” Use the worksheet to go beyond your primary instructional strategy to complement it with a second and/or a third. Find an aspect of your goal that can be approached through one of the other “families” of strategies. Then plan an activity in the second quadrant which complements your primary plan. Using multiple approaches will not only reinforce learners’ experience by calling on different senses and skills, it will also draw in more learners (whose preferred mode of learning may lie in another family). Ideally, you could mix a short activity from all four families to solidify mastery of each learning goal.

4 Ask an observer to give you feedback. Trade classroom visits with a peer, or invite your principal to “walk-through” often during a week to see what response you get from learners to the different strategies you include.

Fresh eyes see things that the planner never would notice, and multiple pairs of eyes see more than you can alone. Discussing what worked and where you’re still problem-solving can help determine whether you’re satisfied with your current repertoire of classroom activities and practices... or whether you want to continue to increase your options.

The checklists B-I could be helpful for your observer to use to make notes.

Getting more mileage from expanding your instructional options

How using multiple instructional strategies benefits your school in regard to the following initiatives:

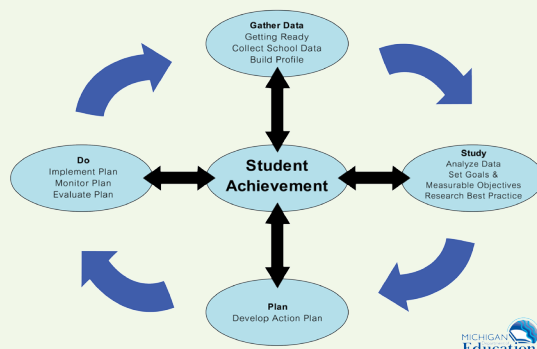
Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

- States and schools must demonstrate that student achievement is improving and that academic gaps are being eliminated for the school as a whole and by all subgroups of 30 or more students.
- Knowing student strengths and weaknesses is not enough. Highly qualified teachers must have a repertoire of strategies broad enough so that they can adjust instruction to meet individual needs. Teachers and teacher teams must consistently acquire, discuss, and evaluate new instructional strategies so that they can meet the varied needs of their students.

State Accreditation System

- The points associated with school performance indicators depend on a school staff continuing to improve instruction so that all students achieve adequate yearly progress. Many indicators can be documented by demonstrations of staff utilizing multiple evidence-based instructional strategies.

Michigan Continuous School Improvement Process (Mi-CSI) Michigan School Improvement Framework



This packet contains the steps to lead a staff through a process to reach the essence of the established goals and to meet the individual learning needs of each student. It envisions conducting research to discover the most effective practice to meet those goals.



Resources

Books, Articles, Websites

Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement

Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering,
Jane E. Pollock. ASCD, 2001.

An information-packed 40-page booklet that outlines many of the needs and predictable stressors for each temperament, with suggestions for responses. Great for classrooms.

What Works Clearinghouse US Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

A central and trusted source of scientific evidence for what works in education.

Doing What Works

<http://dww.ed.gov/index.cfm>

Doing What Works (DWW) is a website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of DWW is to create an online library of resources that may help teachers, schools, districts, states and technical assistance providers implement research-based instructional practice.

Source for Instructional Strategy Checklists

Association of California School
Administrators (ACSA) Region XVII
Staff Development Committee

The Teaching for Learning Framework

<http://www.teachingforlearning.org/>

The Teaching for Learning Framework, a project of the Michigan Department of Education – Office of Education Improvement and Innovation, was created to support effective instruction in challenging content across all grade levels and content areas.

M.O.R.E. Portal

<http://more.mel.org/>

Locate lesson plans and curriculum aids that are searchable by subject or state standard.

Michigan LearnPort

<http://www.learnport.org>

Michigan LearnPort provides online learning solutions for educators: Access high-quality online courses and resources, meet professional development requirements, earn SB-CEUs and more.

People

Intermediate School Districts/RESAs can serve as a resource.

For more information, contact:

Michigan Department of Education

Office of Education
Improvement and Innovation
517-241-3147

School Improvement Unit
517-373-8480

Curriculum and Instruction Unit
517-241-4285

Office of Assessment
and Accountability
517-373-0048

Office of Early Childhood
and Family Services
517-241-3592

Office of Field Services
517-373-3921

Office of Professional Preparation
and Teacher Certification
517-373-6505

Office of Special Education
and Early Intervention Services
517-373-9433

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www.michigan.gov/mde